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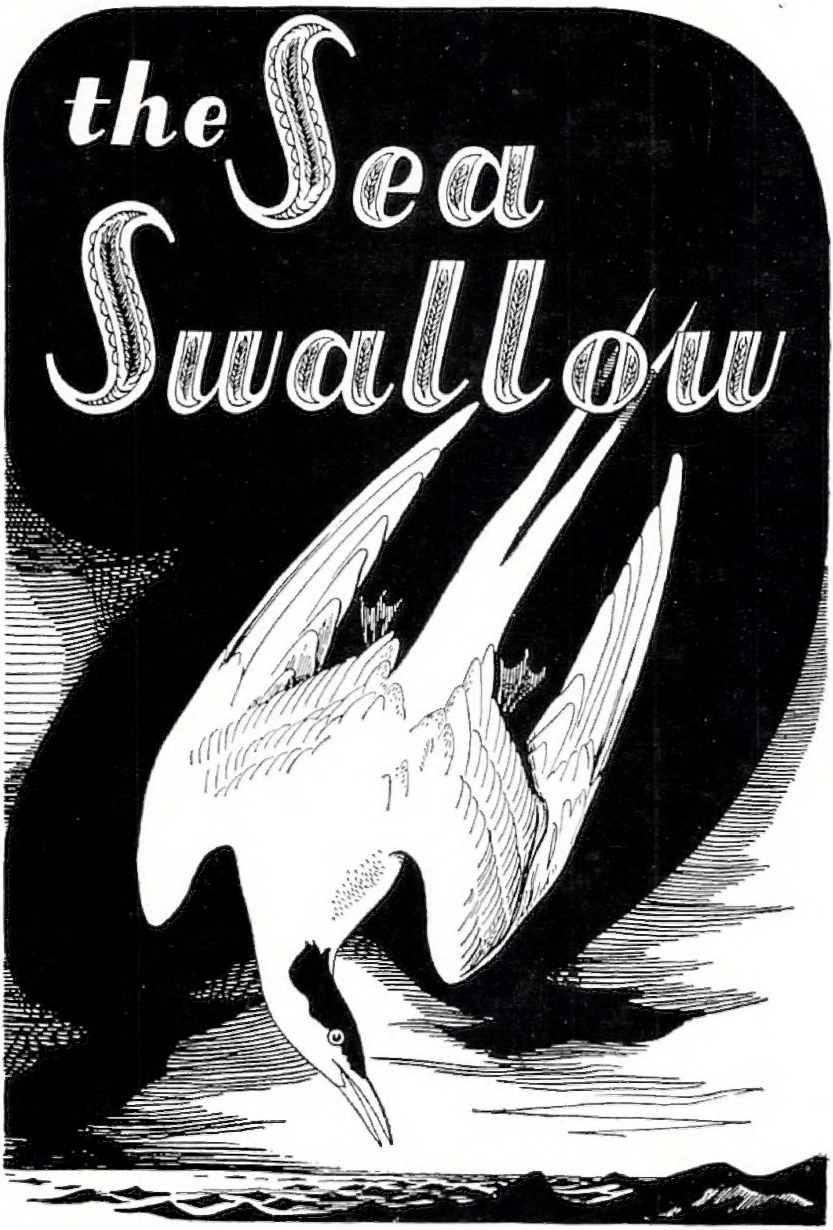

BEING THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ROYAL NAVAL BIRD WATCHING SOCIETY

PUBLISHED 1979

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Hoopoe, *Upupa epops*
on board ship in Persian Gulf
Photo : Captain D. M. Simpson, M.N.

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FOREWORD

It is with pleasure that I write the foreword again this year for *Sea Swallow*, the year that our chairman's book "A Field Guide to the Seabirds of Britain and the World" has been published. It is a monumental work, authoritative and comprehensive, and a great advance, with no disrespect to Alexander, on any previous book on the subject. With characteristic modesty Gerald Tuck pays tribute to the members of the R.N.B.W.S. who through their sea reports and by other means have been of help to him. Members should be proud to have contributed to this classic work. I can only trust that every seagoing ship will have this book in its library and that it will be in the possession of everybody who is even only remotely interested in seabirds. It should certainly stimulate interest to the uninitiated as well as being of use to observers.

There must surely be someone in every seagoing ship who has an interest, if only slight, in ocean birds. Armed with Gerald Tuck's book he should be able to create a cell in his ship and stimulate enough interest to send in R.N.B.W.S. sea reports regularly.

By this means we, as a society, should continue to further the knowledge of seabirds of the world with the unique opportunities available to seagoers, and perhaps contribute to the first revised edition to our chairman's book.

1978 has been a good year for R.N.B.W.S. with sustained membership and plenty of Sea reports coming in. But we do need more young members to carry on the good work.

NIGEL HENDERSON, *President*

EDITORIAL

MEMBERSHIP. Since the publication of *Sea Swallow* Vol. 27 – 16 new members have joined, increasing our total from 349 last year to 365 up to date, excluding our 84 associate members and R.N.B.W.S. local representatives overseas.

SEA PASSAGE REPORTS – SEABIRDS have covered 77 separate voyages, and an additional 37 LANDBIRD PASSAGE RETURNS up to date, thus making a total of over one hundred passage records over a wide field around the world.

The reports from meteorological log reporting by ships on birds observed have also increased, many showing the care and attention given to proper rest and recuperation to those retrieved onboard, before being launched once again into the air.

OCEAN WEATHER REPORTING SHIPS AT STATION LIMA (50°N, 26°W) have been received unabated throughout the year. We are indeed most grateful for the continuing value and interest shown by all our observers.

ADDITIONAL REPORTS – During the year a number of additional interesting articles from differing areas have been received from members for which unfortunately space does not allow for publication in the present volume, but are referred to under "Short Notes".

A FIELD GUIDE TO THE SEABIRDS OF BRITAIN AND THE WORLD – GERALD TUCK. HERMANN HEINZEL, BRITISH EDITION. Collins, London, £5.25.

An advanced copy of the final publication has kindly been received by me from the printers, and publication by Collins of London is due during November. Apart from the general text and descriptions of each species, 313 individual oceanic distribution maps of the breeding and distribution areas of each species, and world oceanic currents affecting zones of high surface feed, the book is illustrated with full coloured illustrations of 781 species in addition to 138 line drawings within the texts by our illustrator Hermann Heinzel.

It is hoped to publish its companion volume during 1979.

SEABIRDS OF THE OCEAN ROUTES

A separate "Companion Volume" is also now under preparation covering in narrative form the seabirds likely to be encountered during individual voyages over 25 of the principal ocean routes around the world.

Best wishes to all.

GERALD TUCK, *Editor*

Penguins on Elephant Island Group
Top: Chinstrap Penguin, *Pygoscelis antarctica*
Right: Rockhopper Penguin, *Eudyptes chrysocome* = *crestatus*
Centre: Macaroni Penguin, *Eudyptes chrysolophus*

CRESTED PENGUINS IN THE ELEPHANT ISLAND GROUP

By Commander J. R. Furse, R.N., Leader of the Expedition

The Crested Penguins form a distinct genus *Eudyptes* ("beautiful diver"), a most appropriate name with their fine golden head plumes.

John Warham's chapter, "The Crested Penguins" in *The Biology of Penguins* by Bernard Stonehouse (1975), summarises present knowledge of these smart Antarctic and sub-Antarctic birds The taxonomy of the genus is complex, but Warham and most other authorities accept 5 or 6 species (depending on whether the Royal is considered a subspecies of the Macaroni, or a separate species).

Erect-crested Penguin — *eudyptes sclateri*
Fjordland Penguin — *eudyptes pachyrhynchus*
Snares Island Penguin — *eudyptes atratus*
Rockhopper Penguin — *eudyptes chrysocome* (= *crestatus*)
Royal Penguin — *eudyptes schlegeli*
Macaroni Penguin — *eudyptes chrysolophus*

These are all black and white Penguins of medium size (30-48 cms high) with specific differences, most noticeably in their heads, beaks and noisy calls.

The first three closely related species occupy very localised areas near South Island, New Zealand, astride the Sub-tropical Convergence and I will not consider them further.

ROCKHOPPER PENGUIN. The smallest and most widespread, which breeds within the Antarctic at South Georgia and Heard Island, and on the Antarctic Convergence at Macquarie and Kerguelen. In general, it is the most northerly of the Crested Penguins breeding north of the Sub-tropical Convergence at Tristan da Cunha, Amsterdam and St Paul Island as well as many Sub-Antarctic sites in the New Zealand sector, the Indian and Atlantic Oceans, the Falklands and Magellanes. Populations at northern sites are distinct and often placed in a separate subspecies.

MACARONI and ROYAL PENGUINS. Together they cover a more southerly range which is circumpolar except in the Pacific sector where there are no sites.

ROYAL PENGUIN. Breeds only at Macquarie Island on the Antarctic Convergence.

MACARONI PENGUIN. Does not breed in this New Zealand sector, but does in the Indian Ocean at Kerguelen and Heard Islands, and also north of the Antarctic Convergence at the Grozets, Marion and Prince Edward Islands. The bulk of the Macaroni population is in the South Atlantic sector of the Antarctic on the Scotia Arc and Bouvetoy, extending south on to the Antarctic Peninsula, with a northern outpost on the Falklands.

ROCKHOPPER PENGUINS. The northern Rockhoppers and larger southern Royal Macaronis are at the opposite ends of divergence of Crested Penguins but their breeding ranges overlap at Macquarie, Kerguelen, Heard, the Grozets, Marion and Prince Edward, South Georgia and the Falklands.

During two expeditions to the Elephant Island Group I watched Macaroni Penguins breeding near the southern limit of their range on Elephant, Clarence, Gibbs, Aspland and Seal Islands as small minority groups within Chinstrap Penguin colonies, with a total population of under 10,000 pairs, only one colony exceeding 1,000 nests. They were absent from many areas, and no nests were found on Cornwallis, Eadie or O'Brien Islands. Landings were on the beaches except in one colony where they jumped from the sea on to a rock which deterred any Chinstraps from landing. I was unable to make a cohesive study but my observations did match published information.

The annual cycle of Macaronis described below is inferred from literature of the genus with my own observations noted in brackets.

The Macaronis winter at sea probably in parties from 10-100, apparently not in pairs. Few if any stay near breeding colonies. In the second half of October breeding adults return to colonies, males preceding females by about a week. Birds breed first at about 5-9 years old and continue annually, often reaching 12 years old; some younger birds may arrive then and "practise", but 1 and 2 year old birds arrive later to moult in January and February. Males defend a nest site by displays (twisting and waving their plumed heads and braying) with aggressive behaviour. Both sexes tend to return to the same area each year, pair bonds often renewed. The pair remain at the nest and the egg is laid in mid-November, 20-25 days after the male comes ashore, when the colony is a bedlam of birds displaying and stealing stones to build their own nests.

Copulation starts a week before the egg. All Crested Penguins share a peculiar adaptation, laying a small egg first but not brooding it until the second egg is laid, 3-6 days later. The second egg is about $1\frac{1}{2}$ times the volume of the first. Even if both eggs hatch, only one chick survives. (No small eggs were seen in the Elephant Is. group in the hundreds of nests examined from 13th December onwards, but 95% of smaller eggs are lost within two weeks of laying elsewhere, so that is not evidence against two-egg clutches.)

Both adults remain for as long as 8 days, alternating on the egg(s) until the male departs to spend 13-18 days at sea recovering from his 4-week fast. On return, the male relieves the female who has a similar spell at sea. The female returns at the end of incubation, which is consistently 35-37 days. Most hatching is concentrated in a 10-day period (confirmed in E.I. group) but with an overall scatter of up to 3 weeks. (Addled eggs may continue to be

brooded until mid-January.) Breeding dates vary over the range with southern colonies latest. (Peak hatching of Macaronis in the E.I. group was up to one week *after* that of Chinstraps, i.e. over the second half of December on Elephant and Clarence Islands, but about a week later on Gibbs and Aspland.)

For two to three days both adults stay at the nest, the female feeding the chick. Then the female goes to sea, returning to feed the chick, the male remaining at the nest (on Clarence and Gibbs 15 out of 15 adults feeding chicks between 6th and 20th January were females).

CHICKS. Eyes open after 4 to 6 days; at about 12 days the first down is pushed out by the second down (which is dark sooty-brown above and white below). At about 18 days the chick is too big to be brooded but the male guards the nest (as Brown Skuas can take intended chicks even this big). The chicks now start moving around and begin to gather in small parties or creches of up to 30. At about 30 days of age in late January the males relinquish their guardianship.

Wareham states that after the first few days the females return almost daily, usually in the afternoon. However, in South Georgia they average two days at sea between feeds. (In the E.I. group stomach contents of Macaronis were much more digested than those of Chinstraps which spend only a half to one day at sea.) The Macaronis may be ecologically separated from the Chinstraps by both range and diet, as the latter take large Krill almost exclusively, whilst the Macaroni take much more small Krill and fish.

After the guard period the chick is fed by both parents which may be necessary to accelerate chick growth.

By early March the chicks are losing their down and may be mistaken for moulting adults. Chicks exercise by whirring their flippers, and gradually they disappear from the colony, departing to sea 67-75 days after hatching. By mid-March few if any remain. By now most of the younger non-breeders have finished moulting and left, the colonies being occupied by a few moulting breeders whose nests failed early on.

After fledging, both parents probably go to sea for 30-35 days to fatten up. They then return to the colony to moult, when they become tattier and tattier and shed old feathers as a new shiny suit grows. After about 30 days they depart once more to sea (in the first half of May?). When final stragglers have left in May sites are deserted for about five months before the cycle restarts in October.

The Macaronis were within their normal range in the Elephant Island group though near their southern limit. By contrast, two other species of Crested Penguin were seen there in 1976/77 far from the nearest parts of their known ranges. A Royal Penguin, unpaired and moulting in late January, had probably been a vagrant from Macquarie Island.

In early January too, Andy Simkins found a Rockhopper with a Macaroni at an empty nest on Aspland I. Even more interesting, Mike Wimpenny and Chris Hurran on 15th December on Clarence I. found a Rockhopper in a Chinstrap colony brooding two eggs. (This single record of two-egg clutches contrasted with many negative records of Macaronis.) The nest was visited on at least 8 days when there was always one Rockhopper present and never any Macaroni, providing circumstantial evidence, but not proof, of a pair of Rockhoppers breeding. On 31st December a chick hatched (i.e. in the Macaroni's period). On 25th January the chick was found a few metres away freshly dead, and thought to have been probably pecked to death by neighbouring Chinstrap Penguins. This chick is believed to be the first record of a Rockhopper breeding in the Antarctic Treaty Area. It is always fine to record a "first" such as this - beware of first impressions!

Macaroni Penguins

A VOYAGE IN THE CARIBBEAN AND GULF OF MEXICO, APRIL, 1977

By P. W. G. Chilman, M.N.

My ship, S.S. *Lembulus*, a Shell tanker of 275,000 tons dwt, loaded in the Persian Gulf for discharge to lightening ships off the Mississippi. All the navigating officers were reasonably interested in birds and could be relied upon to keep me informed of any visitors; two of them were old friends who had sailed with me before. I had warned them to be on the lookout for migrants in the Caribbean as I hoped that we might get a few on board. My hopes were realised beyond all my expectations.

We passed between St Lucia and St Vincent on the morning of 15th April, seeing one Magnificent Frigate Bird and a few Bridled Terns and being followed by three or four Wilson's Storm-Petrels and one Pomarine Skua.

On the 16th, Pomarine Skuas were about all day, some following for a considerable time (15 recorded), and three Bridled Terns seen. The first migrant arrived in the middle of firedrill, reported by the Chief Officer on his "walkie-talkie" to the amusement of the crew. A very beautiful male Scarlet Tanager, *Piranga olivacea*, landed on deck, seemingly unperturbed by all the people waving firehoses about, and stayed for about an hour. The ship was then 167 miles south of Puerto Rico and 270 miles north of Venezuela. A good start.

17th. Pomarine Skuas about all day with twelve following at one time, also one Bridled Tern. When about 19 miles off the western end of Haiti, an immature Duck Hawk (Peregrine), *Falco peregrinus anatum*, arrived and settled on board, followed soon after by a Grey Kingbird, *Tyrannus dominicensis*.

18th. Ship passing north of Jamaica, heading up between the Cayman Islands. A Cattle Egret, *Bubulcus ibis*, arrived when 15 miles north of Jamaica and stayed on board for several hours. There was also a very elusive small bird which may have been a Dickcissel, *Spiza americana*. Only one Pomarine Skua seen today. In the afternoon the first Barn Swallow, *Hirundo rustica erythrogaster*, was seen and also an Osprey was heading steadily north at about 150 feet until it apparently got a whiff of our funnel fumes, turned away and spiralled up to several thousand feet.

19th. Between the Cayman Islands and west end of Cuba. At dawn there was one Cattle Egret on board and they built up to eight as the day progressed. Also flocks of 5 and 13 passed, heading towards Cuba low over the water. Also on board today four Barn Swallows, one Kingbird, *Tyrannus tyrannus*, one female American Redstart, *Setophaga ruticilla*, one Cat Bird, *Dumetella carolinensis*, and one Bank Swallow (Sand Martin), *Riparia riparia*

20th. Gulf of Mexico, northeast of Yucatan. Three Cattle Egrets on board at 0500, building up to 14 at 1400. 13 of these left at 1700 and flew off to the north while three more arrived about 1800 and one other was seen passing. Seven adult Pomarine Skuas seen during the day. One Yellow Billed Cuckoo, *Cocoyzus americanus*, on board and one Barn Swallow and one Laughing Gull, *Larus atricilla*, observed passing.

21st. Ship arrived at the Mississippi Lightening Area centred on 28°00′N, 89°30′W, 54 miles south of the southern tip of the Mississippi delta at 1100.

At 0730 there were seven Cattle Egrets on board, two Barn Swallows, one Mourning Dove, *Zenaidura macroura*, and one small Warbler. During the morning a flock of 13 Cattle Egrets, one Green Heron, *Butorides virescens*, a male Yellow Throat, *Geothlypis trichas*, and a small Thrush came on board. A Barn Swallow, six Pomarine Skuas and a probable Osprey were seen. The Yellow Throat and ones seen later were very bold, and were called "bandits" by the crew because of their conspicuous black masks.

At about 1900 on the 21st, while lightening to a ship alongside, a violent thunderstorm with torrential rain reached the ship and stayed over it for about 1½ hours. Soon after it started small birds were seen flying about in the floodlights of the two ships. After the rain stopped, there were at least a thousand birds swirling round the ships, probably many more. Most of the birds were small and unidentified, but amongst them were flocks of 25 and 7 Cattle Egrets, at least two Green Herons, a Yellow Billed Cuckoo, a scarlet bird that must have been a Tanager, and one Nighthawk, *Chordeiles minor*. Curiously, no *hirundines* were seen.

The ship remained in the lightening area until early on the 26th April, discharging to five ships in all. Large numbers of birds were on board each day, eleven were caught and examined, some seen 22nd to 25th were American Egret, *Casmerodius albus egretta*, 3 including one immature; Lousiana Heron, *Hydranassa tricolor ruficollis*; 2 probable Cattle Egret, *Bubulcus ibis*, on board each day, maximum at one time 12. Some birds certainly stayed for more than one day but there was also constant change. Green Heron, *Butorides virescens*, up to six each day. Least Bittern, female, *Ixobrychus exilis*, 1. Quite fearless, or stupid, picked up by the Chief Officer and given to me for examination. Duck Hawk (Peregrine), *Falco peregrinus anatum*, 1; Pigeon Hawk (Merlin), *Falco columbarius*, one for first three days, probably the same one. Caught several birds including a Wood Thrush, American Sparrowhawk (Kestrel), *Falco sparveirius*, one female; Sora Rail, *Porzana carolina*, 3; American Purple Gallinule, *Porphyrula martinica*, up to three on board each day, one observed swimming in the sea. Pomarine Skuas seen every day, mainly light phase

adults but some dark phase and some immatures. Maximum number: 19 together on water on 22nd. Herring Gull, many present each day, maximum number 87, mostly semi-adult birds. Laughing Gull, *Larus atricilla*, present each day, maximum 12. Yellow Billed Cuckoo, *Coccyzus americanus*, 1; Kingbird, *Tyrannus tyrannus*, 2; Bank Swallow (Sand Martin), *Riparia riparia*, 2; Barn Swallow, *Hirundo rustica erythrogaster*, 11 on 22nd, 6 on 23rd, 2 on 24th, none on 25th. Purple Martin, *Progne subis*, 1; Cat Bird, *Dumetella carolinensis*, 2; Wood Thrush, *Hylocichla mustelina*, 3; Olive Backed Thrush, *Hylocichla ustulata*, 1; Veery, *Hylocichla fuscescens*, 1; Red-eyed Vireo, *Vireo olivaceus*, 1; Warbling Vireo, *Vireo gilvus*, 1; Prothontary Warbler, *Protonotaria citrea*, 1; Blackpoll Warbler, *Dendroica striata*, 3; Oven Bird, *Seiurus aurocapillus*, 3; Yellow Throat, *Goothlypis trichas*, 6; Hooded Warbler, *Wilsonia citrina*, 2; American Redstart, *Setophaga ruticilla*, 1 male; Scarlet Tanager, *Piranga olivacea*, 3; Summer Tanager, *Piranga rubra*, 2; Rose Breasted Grosbeak, *Pheucticus ludovicianus*, 2 males. There were also a good many other small birds which I could not get near enough to identify.

26th April. We left the lightening area about 0300 to return to the Persian Gulf. At 0600 there was one Cattle Egret on board from the previous day, known by patch of oil on tail. Between 0600 and 0700 three separate ones were seen flying northwest. Between 0900 and 0930, 45 were seen in flocks of 8 to 15 and the Officer of the Watch sighted at least 50 more up to 1100 all flying northwesterly. During the morning two Barn Swallows, one Yellow-Billed Cuckoo, one Herring Gull, two fine male Bobolinks, *Dolichonyx oryzivorous*, one Pomarine Skua, one possible Semipalmated Sandpiper, *Ereunetes pusillus*, one Green Heron, one American Purple Gallinule and five Sora Rails were either on board or passed. At 1300, 35 Cattle Egrets were counted on board which had decreased to 25 at 1630. One female Rose-Breasted Grosbeak arrived and subsequently died. During the late afternoon a Duck Hawk (Peregrine) arrived from astern carrying a Green Heron in its talons and flew around for some time plucking it before settling on board to eat it. Also on board were a Mourning Dove, at least six Barn Swallows, two Prothontary Warblers and a female Blackpoll Warbler.

27th. At 0900 we were 27 miles WSW of Cape San Antonio, the western tip of Cuba, proceeding towards the Cayman Islands. Several Cattle Egrets on board during the day, including the oil-marked one, building up to at least 15 by late afternoon. One Barn Swallow, one Warbling Vireo and one Spotted Sandpiper, *Actitis macularia*, were picked up dead. One, possibly two, female Blackpoll Warblers and a Sora Rail on board and also a large domestic pigeon with rings on both legs. A group of three Barn Swallows passed.

28th. 18 miles north of Montego Bay, Jamaica at 1700. A quieter day. At least 4 Cattle Egrets still on board including the oil-marked one.

29th. 35 miles south of southwest tip of Haiti at 0930. No birds seen all day, but one Bobolink and one Northern Water Thrush, *Seiurus novoboracensis*, picked up dead in the morning.

30th. 1100, position 16°11'N, 69°05'W. One adult Pomarine Skua following ship from 0930 until just after 1300, joined by another about 1100 which left with the other.

1st May. One flock of about 50 small birds seen heading NNE when about 105 miles west of St Vincent.

Altogether a memorable trip; I have never seen so many different species at sea in such a short time.

An interesting point is the number of Cattle Egrets migrating to the U.S.A. My American bird book, Peterson, published in 1964, does not mention them even as accidentals so the northward expansion must have been very rapid.

[*By Editor.* Reference books:

The Birds of the West Indies : James Bond, 1961. Collins, London.

A Field Guide to the Birds. Eastern Land and Water Birds : Roger Tory Peterson. 2nd Revised Enlarged Edition. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston.]

BIRDS OF SOME COASTAL AREAS OF THE GULF OF OMAN

By Lt.-Cdr. P. M. Reynolds, R.N.

Observations have been made at various times in three areas within the region: at Moghu, Iran, some 100 miles westward of Bandar Abbas; in the vicinity of Bandar Abbas itself; and at various points along the coastal strip between Ras al Kuh and Jask East Bay, southwest Iran. The former site is coastal scrubland with no surface water, sparse vegetation, and crossed by deep wadis. Bandar Abbas itself is a sprawling urban area backed by rocky desert and a range of mountains some 2000m in altitude. The coastline observed covers about 100 miles, and is low-lying and sandy, frequently backed by shallow lagoons, with extensive sand dunes and salt flats. There is a large area of mangrove swamp on the eastern side of Jask East Bay.

a. MOGHU (mid-April 1978)

This isolated and very sparsely populated area, consisting of scrubland backed by bare rocky mountains, holds a great variety of scrub- and desert-loving species. Several pairs of Hoopoe were observed, and Wheatears noted included Hume's, Isabelline, Mourning and Red-Tailed. The wadi beds, where the sparse vegetation grew strongest, contained Spotted Flycatcher, White-cheeked Bulbil, many pairs of White-throated Robin, Rufous Bushchat, Scrub Warbler, and the seemingly ubiquitous Red-backed Shrike. Insect life abounded and was clearly the principal food source. Nightjar were also noted and Blue-cheeked Bee-eaters were numerous. Few birds of prey were observed, but one Kestrel was seen, and Ospreys fishing offshore. These latter are known to breed in considerable numbers on the island of Jazireh-ye Farur, about 20 miles to the southeast. A small flock of Egyptian Vultures was noted in the mountainous area behind the coastal plain as well as three pairs of Ravens, which are believed to be Brown-necked.

b. BANDAR ABBAS

(various visits between end November '77 and end May '78)

Bandar Abbas is a rapidly expanding "new town", growing up around the commercial and military port areas. Only a few years ago the downtown area was formed of desolate mud flats but these have gradually been reclaimed and there is now very little left. The last part is now in the process of being canalised to enable the main road to be widened. This tidal mud flat area was, in the early part of the visits, a very popular area for shore birds, and Reef Heron, Grey Heron, Great White Egret and even a small flock of Greater Flamingo have been observed there, as well as the smaller Waders, Redshank, Dunlin, Little Stint and Sanderling. Very little occurs there now, but a more interesting

area is that some five miles to the westward along the coast, where the outfall from a newly-constructed power station attracts many Waders to the vicinity.

Even the town-dwelling birds have shown a distinct change during the period of observations. The typical species to be found are Rollers, Crested Larks, White Wagtails, Bulbuls and Swifts inside the city - the erstwhile ubiquitous Black Kites and Buzzards, which thrived on the refuse everywhere available, are now being slowly driven to the urban margins, and are less commonly observed within the city limits. The same is the case with the Egyptian Vulture. Two years ago a common sight in Bandar Abbas, it is now only to be seen in the surrounding villages and the foothills of the nearby mountains.

Some 10 miles inland from the city is an extensive area of mountains, rising to over 2000m in altitude, and which have been designated by the Iranian authorities as a nature reserve. It is rumoured that leopard are to be found here - this was not substantiated! It is a vast area and would take weeks to cover, but a single day was rewarded with the sight of a pair of Hume's Lesser Whitethroat at their nest, several Eastern Rock Nuthatch, and, the biggest prize, a pair of Lammergeier. This entire area is very inaccessible, and there is certainly an abundance of mountain and desert species to be found there.

Although the Iranian Department of the Environment is now taking steps to promote the conservation of wildlife in the country, the Iranians are still keen hunters, and this even takes place on occasions inside the reserve! Nevertheless, the avifauna of the south is badly documented, and would well repay a closer study.

c. THE COASTAL AREAS TO THE SOUTH OF BANDAR ABBAS

From Ras Sirik, past Ras al Kuh and Jask to Jask East Bay, this area is a series of low-lying sand dunes, backed by saltings and lagoons and, on the eastern side of Jask East Bay, by mangrove swamp.

The first areas visited were in the region of Ras Sirik and Ras al Kuh. These are basically sandy areas, with many tidal mud flats and small lagoons. Both areas held a considerable number of shore birds between November and March. Flocks of up to 15 Dalmatian Pelican were observed, as well as numerous Egrets and Reef Heron. The mud flats held Curlew, Oystercatcher and Bar-tailed Godwit, of which only four were observed at this time of the year. Kentish Plover and Sanderling were common on the shoreline, and the occasional Turnstone was seen. The coastal areas and lagoons held an abundance of fish, and up to 4 Osprey were noted at one time fishing here. Terns were, of course, well represented, and Caspian, Greater and Lesser Crested, Bridled and Saunder's Little Terns were all quite common around the coastal area. The occasional Sandwich Tern was also observed, and Gull-billed Terns hunted over the mud flats. On occasions a solitary Hen Harrier

Osprey's nest on island in Persian Gulf
An unusual site, as no trees on which to build a nest

was observed quartering the mud flats at low tide. Shore birds included Bifasciated Lark and several small flocks of Lesser Short-toed Lark, as well as Brown-necked Raven, which were common scavengers along the coastal strip.

In late April/early May two visits were paid to the eastern side of Jask East Bay, an area of flat, sandy beaches, backed by low sand dunes with sparse vegetation. Behind this are extensive areas of hardened salt flats, backing on to large areas of mangrove swamps. The entire area is broken by salt water inlets which are relatively shallow, reaching far inland, almost as far as the foot-hills of the mountains, some 10 miles inland.

Only the occasional Dalmatian Pelican was seen at this time of year, but Greater Flamingoes were plentiful. A flock of over 100 was observed in flight low over the water, and a smaller flock, of about 24, noted later in the day. No nests were discovered but they are believed to have a breeding colony in a lagoon some 20 miles to the east of Jask. It was, unfortunately, not possible to visit this. On the occasion of the first visit to the area no close approach to the mangrove swamp was possible, but the surrounding flats were observed to hold a considerable number of Waders. Apart from the usual species, already mentioned above, a flock of 12 Bar-tailed Godwits, some in summer plumage, were seen, and two pairs of Greater Sand Plover, as well as the inevitable Osprey.

My following visit to the mangrove swamp was on 14 May. This time I was able to penetrate well into the forest, firstly on foot - a not-too-pleasant experience, and subsequently by inflatable dinghy. Once again, many Waders were in evidence, including both black and white phase of the Reef Heron, and a number of Grey Plover in breeding plumage. In the trees themselves there were large flocks of White Eyes, *Zosterops palpebrosa*, which are not listed in the Iranian handbook. By taking a boat into some of the inter-forest channels a far wider area was rendered accessible, and Paddy Birds, Great White Egret and another species not on the Iranian list, Goliath Heron, were spotted.

As with the other areas visited, this area has much to offer the ornithologist in the way of research, and has the advantage over the other areas in being inaccessible other than from the sea, and therefore little populated and undisturbed.

OCEAN WEATHER SHIP REPORTS 1977/1978
SEABIRDS

By J. H. Agnew, R.N.B.W.S.

Since going to print with *Sea Swallow* No. 27, two further reports on sightings for that period were received: R. J. Burness and Met. staff on *Admiral Beaufort*, 18th July to 10th August; G. Allen on *Admiral Beaufort*, 4th September to 28th September, 1977. The input of these further observations will alter the table on page seventeen of *Sea Swallow* No. 27 thus:

	July	Aug	Sept
Sooty Shearwater	—	o	o
Herring Gull	—		—
Lesser Black-Back Gull	o	—	—
Terns: Arctic	—	o	—
Cory Shearwater	—		
Red-necked Phalarope		—	

Key as for last year's table. All other identifications in that table remain the same.

The figures at the foot of page sixteen of *Sea Swallow*, Vol. 27, should now read: 23543 Fulmar Petrels counted, of which 94 were noted to be Blue Phase. Of the 13 sightings of Pomarine Skuas by R. J. Burness and Met. staff, 8 were pale phase, and 3 of the 18 Arctic Skuas reported were also pale phase.

The observations and counts which make up this 1978 report were supplied by R. C. Aran; R. J. Burness and Met. staff; D. Hampton; R. L. Leitch; D. A. McKenzie; D. Ogle; D. L. Rudge; on board Weather Ships *Admiral Fitzroy* and *Admiral Beaufort*.

Unfortunately it was not possible for observers to maintain continuous reports for the full twelve months, and the table has been marked accordingly.

Of the 17446 reported sightings of Fulmars, 177 were recorded as Blue Phase; and of the 4789 Kittiwakes counted, 922 were immature.

Lesser Black-Backed Gulls were sighted in noticeably greater numbers than last year, and more sightings were recorded of Auks – D. A. McKenzie notes that on 21st May, 2020 hrs, a flight of 9 Little Auks circled the stationary vessel twice before proceeding in a southeasterly direction.

The same observer, on 8th May, watched an immature Kittiwake being harassed by two Pomarine Skuas. The harassment continued for a good half hour, during which time the Kittiwake swooped and wheeled in and out of packs of Fulmars in its endeavour to evade the Skuas. Finally, the Kittiwake alighted on the water some distance from the ship, with a Skua on either side. A little later the Skuas were seen to take off, but no sign of the Kittiwake!

OCEAN WEATHER SHIP OBSERVATIONS
SUMMARY OF SIGHTINGS, STATION LIMA (57°N. 20°W)

OCTOBER 1977 TO SEPTEMBER 1978

	Oc	No	Ja	Fe*	Ma	Ap	My	Ju	Jy	Au	Se*
Fulmar Petrels	o	x	x	o	o	x	x	x	x	x	o
Great Shearwater	o	—					—			—	
Sooty Shearwater	—								—	—	—
Manx Shearwater						—	—	—	—		—
Wilson's Storm-Petrel											—
British Storm-Petrel									—	—	—
Leach's Storm-Petrel							—		—		
Gannet	—		—	—	—	—	—	—	o	—	—
Great Skua	—	—			—	o	o	—	o	o	o
Pomarine Skua	—					—	—	—	—		—
Arctic Skua	—					—	—	—	—	—	—
Long-Tailed Skua							—	—	—	—	—
Herring Gull		—	—		—	—					
Lesser B.-Backed Gull	—			o	o	o	o	o	o	—	o
Great B.-Backed Gull	—	—	—	o	—	—	o	—	—		o
Glaucous Gull	—	—	—		—	—					
Iceland Gull			—								
Kittiwake	o	o	o	o	o	x	o	o	o	o	o
Black-Headed Gull	—					—			—		
Terns: Arctic						—		—	—	—	
Common											—
Little	—										
Little Auk	—	—					—		—		
Guillemots	—	—				—	—	—G	—		
Razorbill							—	—			
Puffin	—					—			—	—	
Cory's Shearwater	—								—		
Little Gull						—					—
Common Gull									—		
Sabine Gull									—		
Little Shearwater									—		
Red-Breasted Merganser	—										

Key: — occasional sighting.
o 1 to 59 sightings daily average.
x more than 50.
* indicates less than 17 days of observations available for that month.
Note no observations available for December.
—G 2 Bridled, 6 Brunich's, 3 Black Guillemots.

LANDBIRD SUMMARY

By Commander M. B. Casement, R.N.

As in previous years I have received a mass of material from a wide variety of sources, including the valuable extracts from Met Logs of Merchant Ships for which I am indebted once again to Mr J. D. W. Brown of the Meteorological Office.

Details are shown in the area tables A to H, and, together with the observations from Ocean Weather Station Lima, the number of identifiable species total 126. Not included are a number of resident species recorded in harbour and inland waterways.

This year I have carried the analysis a stage further, and the following points emerge. The most numerous group of birds recorded at sea is the Heron family which includes the ubiquitous Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*), Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*) (Table G) and Spoonbill (*Platelea leucorodia*) (Tables F and G). This is hardly surprising since they are large and distinctive, and bound to attract attention. For similar reasons, the most regularly reported bird is the Hoopoe (*Upopa epops*) which is recorded in five of the Tables (A, D, E, F and G). By far the most commonly reported species is the Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) which appears in every ocean of the world except, surprisingly, the North Sea and English Channel (Table B). Along with other *hirundines* (Martins and Swifts), Swallows are diurnal migrants and are more regularly seen at sea than the far more numerous nocturnal migrants such as Warblers. Six species of *hirundines* are shown in the Tables, mostly on short sea crossings, e.g. the Red Sea (Table E), but also in mid-Pacific (Table H).

Nine birds of prey and five species of Owl are recorded. Again these are conspicuous and more likely to be reported than the more numerous smaller species, but additionally they are better able to survive long sea passages by feeding on small birds as is regularly reported by ships. Some make prodigious long-distance assisted passages as, for example, the Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*) from mid-Atlantic to Brazil (Table A).

Of the Wader family the Turnstone is the most regularly reported this year, occurring in four of the area tables - in mid-Atlantic (Table C) and in the Mozambique Channel (Table F). The runner-up is the Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*) which is regularly reported in many sea areas again this year.

Second only to the Swallow is the Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*) which features in five tables (A, B, E, F and G), and in the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman (Table G) it is recorded together with four other closely related species. As I have said in many previous *Sea Swallows*, the Wheatear has a well established reputation as a long-distance migrant, and records of this species at sea is of special interest to me, particularly in the East Atlantic.

The Red Sea (Table F) and Persian Gulf (Table G) show an unusual wealth of records this year of both autumn and spring migration. As I know from my own radar observations from H.M.S. *Centaur* in 1963, the Gulf of Aden is an area where the density of night migration exceeds that of anywhere I found in the Mediterranean. The main movement of migration from Eastern Europe and Central Asia to and from East Africa passes through this area.

In the Mediterranean (Table D), the pattern is very similar to previous years, but the Eleonora's Falcon (*Falco eleonorae*) and Little Owl (*Athene noctua*) are notable records.

Many thanks indeed to all those members who sent in their records, and especially to those who show positional details including reference to the nearest point of land. This is an enormous help and saves me hours of work plotting them.

Good luck for the rest of 1979, and do please observe Captain Tuck's recent directive to write direct to me with your landbird records.

M. B. C.

OCEAN WEATHER SHIPS – STATION REPORTS OF LANDBIRDS

Analysis by Commander M. B. Casement, R.N.

The following reports have been received during the period 1977-78 (up to 1 October 78) from weather ships on STATION LIMA 210nm WSW Rockall, 450nm S. Iceland.

1977		
18 Jul-10 Aug	Admiral Beaufort	R. J. Burness and others
4-28 Sept	Admiral Beaufort	G. Allen
7-21 Oct	Admiral FitzRoy	R. C. L. Aran
24 Oct-17 Nov	Admiral Beaufort	R. J. Burness and others
1978		
8-26 Apr	Admiral FitzRoy	R. J. Burness and others
7-24 May	Admiral Beaufort	Ch. Off. D. A. McKenzie
29 May-13 Jun	Admiral FitzRoy	R. C. L. Aran
11-14 Jul	Admiral Beaufort	D. Ogle, D. Hampton, D. L. Rudge
16-20 Jul	Admiral FitzRoy	R. C. L. Aran
31 Aug-25 Sept	Admiral Beaufort	D. Ogle, D. Hampton, D. L. Rudge

Three reports of birds examined in the hand were received:

2 Jun 78	Dunlin	*Calidris alpina*
13 Jun 78	Swallow	*Hirundo rustica*
13 Jun 78	House Martin	*Delichon urbica*

(for details of species recorded, see table).

SEA REPORT SHEETS

Analysis by Commander M. B. Casement, R.N.

The following sea reports of landbirds seen at sea were received during 1977/78 up to 1 October 1978. Extracts are shown in the tables, using the observers' initials as shown:

Capt. P. W. G. Chilman, M.N. (PWGC)	S.S. *Lotorium*
	S.S. *Laconica*
	S.S. *Lembulus*
Radio Officer N. A. Allison, M.N. (NAA)	M.V. *Welsh Voyager*
	M.V. *Anco Duke*
	M.V. *Anco Stane*
Capt. R. R. Will, M.N. (RRW)	S.S. *Dover Castle*
Eng. S. J. Hingston, M.N. (SJH)	M.V. *Sugar Carrier*
2nd Mate J. D. Podmore, M.N. (JTP)	M.V. *Al Jabiriah*
Capt. D. M. Simpson, M.N. (DMS)	M.V. *Pacific Boxer*
	M.V. *Pacific Supplier*
N. Cheshire, M.N. (NC)	M.V. *Tasman Venture*
Lt.-Cdr. P. M. Reynolds, R.N. (PMR)	H.M.S. *Hydra*
Capt. D. W. Luff, M.N. (DWL)	S.S. *Westbury*
Radio Officer W. Weitkovitz (WW)	M.V. *Hans Krüger*
Capt. J. W. Waldie, M.N. (JWW)	M.V. *Cheshire*
Capt. W. C. W. Price, M.N. (WCWP)	S.S. *Mobil Energy*
P. G. Morris, M.N. (PGM)	M.V. *Booker Vanguard*

A number of excellent reports were received (from NAA in particular) of birds seen in harbour and inland waterways, but these have been excluded from the tables except for those records which give indications of migration (e.g. SJH's observations, Table G).

OCEAN STATION LIMA

The following species were recorded on the dates as shown:

	1977	1978
Great Northern Diver (*Gavia immer*)	11 Oct	
Pochard (*Aythya fesina*)		22-23 April
Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*)	29 Oct	
Merlin (*Falco columbarius*)	18 Oct (M), 19 Oct (F)	
Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*)		10 May flying ENE, 9 Sept
Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*)		26 Apr, summer plumage
Purple Sandpiper (*Calidris maritima*)	17 Oct	
Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*)		15 Apr, 2 Jun (died, X) 9 Jun
Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*)		5-6 Sept
Knot (*Calidris canutus*)	18 Sept.	26 Jul
Sanderling (*Calidris alba*)		3 Sept
Redshank (*Tringa totanus*)		26 Apr
Lesser Yellowlegs (*Tringa flavipes*)		7-10 May. Arr. 071200. Wind SE/22kts
		Tame. Fed fish and apples. Dep. 10.
		Wind SSW/26kts
Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*)		30 Apr, 9 May (2), 29 May, dep. NNE,
Collared Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*)		30 Apr till 1 May
Turtle Dove (*Streptopelia turtur*)	7 Oct	
Swift (*Apus apus*)		16 Jul
Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*)		22 Apr, 13 Jun (2)
House Martin (*Delichon urbica*)	13-14 Jun	25 Apr, 13 Jun (died), 13-14 Jul
Meadow Pipit (*Anthus pratensis*)	15 Sept, 23 Sep (2), 7 Oct	
White Wagtail (*Motacilla alba*)		30 Apr
Blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*)	17 Oct (1M, 1F)	
Willow Warbler/Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus* sp.)	21 Oct	
Pied Flycatcher (*Ficedula hypoleuca*)		17 Jul (2), S. 10 mins, dep. S.
Wheatear (*Oenanthe oneanthe*)	19 Sept, 7, 16, 17 Oct, 10 Nov	15 May, 16 Jul
Redstart (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*)	18 Oct (1F)	
Blackbird (*Turdus merula*)		
Redwing (*Turdus iliacus*)	18 Oct (2), 26, 27 Oct	6 Apr (1F)
Lapland Bunting (*Calcarius lapponicus*)	7 Oct	
Snow Bunting (*Plectrophenax nivalis*)	10 Oct, 17 Oct (3), 21, 28, 29 Oct	30 May
Brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla*)		24 May (wind SSW/17kts)
Redpoll (*Acanthis flammea*)	17 Oct	
Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*)	10 Nov	

WEATHER CONDITIONS

As might be expected, the prevailing wind on days when birds were recorded on board was easterly. This was so on every day in October 1977 (mean 120°/10kts) and also in April 1978 (mean 130°/14kts). In May 1978 the wind was SW on four out of the seven days, but on 7 May, when the Lesser Yellowlegs appeared, the recorded wind was SE/22kts. This North American species must have been thoroughly disorientated to have arrived so far east in such conditions.

ANALYSIS BY SEA AREAS

This analysis includes reports from the following sources:

a) R.N.B.W.S. Sea Report Sheets (Landbirds) - observers' initials are shown in the appropriate tables

b) Meteorological Log Returns (identifiable species only) - indicated by MET

Observations are analysed in the following tables by sea areas:

Table A East Atlantic (East of 30°W) including Biscay and Iberlant
B Norwegian and North Seas, English Channel
C West Atlantic (West of 30°W), Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico
D Mediterranean
E Red Sea and Gulf of Aden
F Indian Ocean
G Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman
H Pacific, Philippine Sea and South China Sea

BIRDS EXAMINED IN THE HAND

Only three reports were received:

One from Eng. S. J. Hingston (M.V. *Sugar Carrier*) - Pallid Swift (*Apus pallidus*) - see Table D

Two from Capt. P. W. G. Chilman (S.S. *Liliopa*) - Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*) and Willow Warbler (*Phylloscopus trochilus*)

From the last-named, two species of lice (*Penenurmus* sp.) were collected and were received with interest by the British Museum at Tring.

TABLE A

EAST ATLANTIC (EAST OF 30°W) INCLUDING BISCAY AND IBERLANT

1976

Date (time)	*Obs.*	*Species (Latin name)*	*Posn. (nearest land)*	*Remarks, weather, etc.*
4 Mar 1700	PWGC	Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*)	31°32′N 14°11′W 144′NW Lanzarote (Canaries)	S. NNE/3. Cloudy
27 Aug 0830	PWGC	Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*)	32°12′S 16°32′E 90′W SW Africa	S 1 hr. SW/3. Overcast
6 Sept 1500	PWGC	Swallow (juv)	14°00′N 18°36′W 85′SW C. Verde	NW/4, bc
		Turtle Dove (3) (*Streptopelia turtur*)		
1630		Turtle Dove (5)	14°26′N 18°36′W 50′WSW C. Verde	3 above, joined by 2 more
20 Sept 1030	PWGC	Turtle Dove (3)	47°04′N 07°29′W 125′SE Ushant	S all day. SSE. Cloudy
1610		Turtle Dove (8)	46°02′N 08°25′W	S
		Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*)	200′SE Ushant	S
		Pied Flycatcher (*Ficedula hypoleuca*)	140′N Spain	S
21 Sept	PWGC	Turtle Dove (3)	41°17′N 11°03′W 100′W Oporto	S. Light airs. Overcast
22 Sept 1700	PWGC	Turtle Dove (2)	30°27′N 12°54′W 195′W C. St Vincent	S. NW/2, bc
		Wheatear		S
		Willow Warbler (*Phylloscopus trochilus*)		S
25 Sept 1900	PWGC	Swallow (2 juv)	21°55′N 18°10′W 60′W Spanish Sahara	S. N/2. Cloudy
		Wheatear (3)		S
26 Sept 1730	PWGC	Turtle Dove	16°56′N 18°30′W 150′NW Dakar	S. NNE/4. Cloudy
		Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*)		S

27 Sept 1600-1800	PWGC	Swallow (20+)	12°15′N 12°40′W 162′SSW Dakar	S. Increased from one at 1615 to max. 20 at 1800.
		Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*)		S. till am 28th.
		Kestrel (4F or juv) (*Falco tinnunculus*)		One at 1650, two at 1745, four at 1755. Seen to catch and eat at least two Swallows. Two S until am 29th
28 Sept 0920	PWGC	Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*)	09°05′N 17°57′W	Circling
		Turtle Dove	285′W C. Sierra Leone	
		Swallow (at least 20)	150′SW Bijagos Is.	2 died
1700		Whimbrel	07°50′N 16°57′W	
28 Nov	MET	Curlew/Whimbrel (*Numenius* sp)	3°30′S 7°42′W 450′S Ivory Coast	S 1-2 hrs. Dep S M.V. *Shirrabank*

1977

12 Aug 1700	RRW	Turtle Dove	24°00′N 17°00′W 80′W Sahara	S till dark. NNE/5. Vis poor
13 Aug 1200	RRW	Swift (*Apus apus*)	19°00′N 18°00′W 130′W Spanish Sahara	S all day. N/3. Vis mod
23 Aug	MET	Unidentified Warbler sp.	07°30′N 27°00′W 550′S C. Verde Is.	M.V. *Victore* (3/O. J. L. David). Took passage 7 days to Rio de Janeiro. Tame. Took no food except sugar and water
14-15 Sept	MET	Firecrest (several) (*Regulus ignicapillus*)	Bay of Biscay	M.V. *Ethel Everard*
		Meadow Pipit (*Anthus pratensis*) (2)		
16 Sept	MET	Quail (*Coturnix coturnix*)	42°N 9°18′W 40′W Vigo (Portugal)	M.V. *Ethel Everard*. Fed on flies. Released alive in Malta
11 Oct 1300	MET	Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*)	4°35′N 10°14′W 60′ Liberian Coast	S 3 hrs M.V. *Heythrop*
25 Oct 1400	PMR	Goldcrest (2M) (*Regulus regulus*)	47°50′N 6°W 60′SW Ushant	S 2 hrs. X. Dep S. Wind S/1

ANALYSIS BY SEA AREAS—TABLE A 1977 (*continued*)

Date (time)	*Obs.*	*Species (Latin name)*	*Posn. (nearest land)*	*Remarks, weather, etc.*
26 Oct 0830	PMR	Robin (3) (*Erithacus rubecula*)	44°32′N 8°15′W Biscay. 55′NW Spain	Arr NE. S 1-2 days. Dep SSW 8/8 cu. Vis. good
1030		Black Redstart (2F) (*Phoenicurus ochruros*) Starling (4) (*Sturnus vulgaris*)		1 flew past. 2 S. 36 hrs
27 Oct 1245	PMR	Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*)	38°53′N9°50′W 20′W Portugal	S 22 hrs. Weak. Died. Wind NE/2
15 Dec 1300		Kestrel (juv M) (*Falco tinnunculus*)	06°22′N 29°W 600′S C. Verde Is. Mid-Atlantic	Wind SE/5. Fed on beef. Photo. Released off Noronya Is. (Brazil) 04°S 32°5′W

1978

13 Apr	MET	Hoopoe (*Upopa epops*)	24°14′N 16°45′W 50′W Spanish Sahara	M.V. *City of Ottawa*
2 May 2000Z	MET	House Martin (*Delichon urbica*)	48°N 7°25′W S.W. Approaches	C.S. *Manchester Vigour*. Wind SE/6
10 May 1815	DMS	House Martin	36°21′N 30°07′W 150′SW Azores	Circled 1 hr. S/4. Good vis
12 May 1400	MET	Little Owl (*Athene noctua*)	36°30′N 12°36′W	M.V. *Wild Mallard*. 1 day
14 May 0650	PGM	Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*)	50°30′N 9°W 55′S Ireland	Arr S. Flew past heading N. WSW/7. Good vis.
21 Aug	RRW	Hoopoe	30°24′N 11°42′W 90′W Morocco	Seen briefly. NE/3. Poor vis.

TABLE B

NORWEGIAN AND NORTH SEA AND ENGLISH CHANNEL

1976

Date (time)	*Obs.*	*Species (Latin name)*	*Posn. (nearest land)*	*Remarks, weather, etc.*
18 Sept	PWGC	Buzzard (*Buteo buteo*)	51°45′N 02°27′E	S. 14 mins Dep S
1700			38′SE Orfordness	SSE/2, overcast
		Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*)		Dep S
		Swift (2) (*Apus apus*)		Dep S
19 Sept	PWGC	Meadow Pipit (*Anthus pratensis*)	49°36′N 03°42′W	Light airs, overcast
1530			37′S Start Point	Found dead
1700		Spotted Flycatcher (2) (*Muscicapa striatus*)	49°27′N 04°05′W 55′W Guernsey	
		Wheatear (2)		
		Robin (1) (*Erithacus rubecula*)		

1977

8 Aug	MET	Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*)	61°02′N 01°35′E 70′NE Shetlands	S. M.V. *Vickers Viscount*
1800				
19 Aug	MET	Grey Wagtail (*Motacilla cinerea*)	67°13′N 06°27′W 210°ENE Iceland	RRS *Shackleton*
			420′W Lofoten Is.	Also 2 small unidentified finches or buntings
8 Oct	MET	Tawny Owl (*Strix aluco*)	55°12′N 02°49′E	M.V. *Singularity*
1240			110′NE Humber	Wind SE/4
		Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*)		Arr. N. Circled
4 Dec	MET	Hooded Crow (*Corvus corone cornix*)	57°30′N 08°48′E Skagerrak	M.V. *Vickers Viscount* S during fog

ANALYSIS BY SEA AREAS—TABLE B (*continued*)

1978

Date (time)	*Obs.*	*Species (Latin name)*	*Posn. (nearest land)*	*Remarks, weather, etc.*
12 Mar	MET	Pied Wagtail (2) (*Motacilla alba*)	57°42′N 00°09′E Forties Field	M.V. *Forties Kiwi*
17 Apr 1500	MET	Blue Throat (*Luscinia svecica*)	61°N 01°E 55′E Shetlands	M.V. *Vickers Viscount*
23 May	MET	Redshank (*Tringa totanus*) Pied Wagtail Swift (*Apus apus*) Starling Oystercatcher Wood Pigeon (*Columba palumba*)	57°27′N 01°24′E Station Montrose Alpha. 110′NE England	*Lord Mountstephen*
1-6 Aug	MET	Collared Dove (2) (*Streptopelia decaocto*) Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*) Dunlin (3) (*Calidris alpina*) Redshank (4) Oystercatcher (17) Ruff (F) (*Philomachus pugnax*) Golden Plover (2M, 1F, 2 juv) Turnstone (2M, 3F) (*Arenaria interpres*)	59°44′N 00°54′E Forties Field 60′SE Lerwick	M.V. *Forties Kiwi* Capt. J. Guy Chief Off A. A. Beattie 2S. 15 Flying E to W

TABLE C

WEST ATLANTIC (WEST OF 30°W), CARIBBEAN AND GULF OF MEXICO

1976

Date (time)	*Obs.*	*Species (Latin name)*	*Posn. (nearest land)*	*Remarks, weather, etc.*
7 Oct 1130	MET	Peregrine Falcon (juv) (*Falco peregrinus*)	27°45′N 50°30′W 1350′SW Azores	M.V. *Wild Avocet* Fed. Seen eating small bird. Wind NE/6

1977

22-30 Apr	MET	Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*)	20′S Cape Bay, Newfoundland	S.S. *Manchester Crusade* Dep. Irish Sea when approaching Anglesey
23 Apr 2200Z	MET	Sparrow Hawk (*Falco sparverius*) White-throated Sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*) Slate-coloured Junco (*Junco hyemalis*)	W. Atlantic No position given	S.S. *Manchester Crusade* Feeding on white throated sparrow and slate coloured Junco Dep 24th
5-7 May	MET	Purple Gallinule (*Porphyrula martinica*) Black throated Blue Warbler (*Dendroica caerulescens*) Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*)	On passage Cristobal to Penzicola (Florida)	M.V. *Erewan*
19 May 1800Z	MET	Black-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus erthrophthalmus*)	37°10′N 68°55′W 320′E Chesapeake Bay	M.V. *Wild Mallard*
9 Aug	MET	Egret sp.	34°30′N 41°54′W Mid-Atlantic 700′ nearest land (Azores)	M.V. *Geest Star*
18 Aug 1000	RRW	Yellow Warbler (*Dendroica petchea*)	30°12′N 57°35′W 300′SE Bermuda	S. SE/2

ANALYSIS BY SEA AREAS—TABLE C 1977 (*continued*)

Date (time)	*Obs.*	*Species (Latin name)*	*Posn. (nearest land)*	*Remarks, weather, etc.*
31 Aug 1400	MET	Common Nighthawk (*Chordeiles minor*)	12°30′N 79°W 200′N Panama Coast	S.S. *Moreton Bay* S.
23 Sept 1800	MET	Snow Bunting (*Plectrophenax nivalis*)	60°N 60°06′W Davis Strait 200′E Canada	M.V. *Sugar Trader*
2 Oct	MET	Barn Swallow (numerous) (*Hirundo rustica*)	8°N 49′W off French Guiana	M.V. *Sugar Crystal*
18/19 Oct	MET	Eagle/Hawk-Osprey? (*Pandion haliaetus*?)	11°N 40°W 800′NE Brazil 900′SW C. Verde	M.V. *King William*
5 Nov 1200	MET	Barn Swallow	30°N 76°W 260′SE Charleston	S. R.R.S. *Bransfield*
9 Nov	MET	Warbler sp.	27°30′N 73°W 220′NE Bahamas 380′ENE Miami	S. M.V. *Garmula*

1978

29 Apr 0740	WCWP	Brown Pelican (*Pelican occidentalis*)	26°30′N 71°W 180′NE Bahamas	
1 May 1900	WCWP	Barn Swallow	25°40′N 85°W 170′SW Florida	
8 May 2330Z	MET	Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*)	19°25′N 62°10′W 90′NE Sombrero Is.	M.V. *Thamesfield*
13 Aug 0900	NAA	Cliff Swallow (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*)	22°15′N 89°25′W Gulf of Mexico. 50′N Mexico	Arr W. SE/2
3 Sept 1600	NAA	Ovenbird (*Seirus aurocapillus*)	25°50′N 87°W 250′SE Mississippi Basin	
13 Sept 1200	NAA	Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*)	42°02′N 36°39′W Mid-Atlantic 1260′SE Newfoundland 350′NW Azores	S. Turning over debris on deck tired Wind E/3. Hurricane "*Flossie*" 150′ to S.

TABLE D
MEDITERRANEAN

1977

Date (time)	*Obs.*	*Species (Latin name)*	*Posn. (nearest land)*	*Remarks, weather, etc.*
27 July 1600	SJH	Pallid Swift (*Apus pallidus*)	37°25′N 10°18′E 14′NE Bizerta	S 1hr. X. P. Dep. S
22 Sept	MET	Lesser Whitethroat (several) (*Sylvia curruca*)	Central Mediterranean	M.V. *Ethel Everard*
7 Oct	MET	Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*)	38°33′N 8°09′E 20′N Algerian Coast	S 1 min. dep towards Sardinia M.V. *Al Ahmadiah*
8 Oct 1100	MET	Hoopoe (*Upopa epops*)	37°08′N 6°E	S.S. *Benledi*
18 Oct	MET	Robin (*Erithacus rubecula*)	Off Tripoli	M.V. *Ethel Everard*
24 Oct	MET	Eleonora's Falcon (*Falco eleonorae*)	37°37′N 10°42′E 30′N C. Bon	C.S. *Manchester Vanguard*
2 Nov 1600	PMR	White Wagtail (2) (*Motacilla alba*) Robin	15′N Algerian Coast	S 1 hr. Wind W/2 vis 10nm S 3-4 hrs.
3 Nov 0800	PMR	Chaffinch (1M. 1F) (*Fringilla coelebs*)	18′NW C. Bougaroni. Algeria	S. SW/1
10 Nov 1600	PMR	Goldfinch (2) (*Carduelis carduelis*)	33°08′N 25°55′E 85′N Libya	S 2 hrs. (1) 24 hrs. (1) Wind N/2 Cloud 1/8
16 Nov	MET	Robin	35°55′N 16°E 70′SE Sicily	Vis. 10nm S.S. *Benelbanach*

1978

23 Mar	WW	Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*)	34°22′N 25°45′E 10′S Crete	S. exhausted Near gale
6 Apr 1750	MET	Swallow Sand Martin (*Riparia riparia*) Robin Lesser Kestrel (*Falco naumanni*)	37°30′N 6°24′E 25′N Algeria	S.S. *British Tenacity*

ANALYSIS BY SEA AREAS—TABLE D 1978 (*continued*)

Date (time)	*Obs.*	*Species (Latin name)*	*Posn. (nearest land)*	*Remarks, weather, etc.*
23 Apr 0715Z	MET	Little Owl (*Athene noctua*) Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*) Chaffinch Bee-eater (*Merops apiaster*)	33°10′N 25°50′E 85′N Sollum	M.V. *Strathdirk* (3/O Ross and Coder Herriott) Kestrel caught and ate small bird or insect on wing
28 Jul 1100Z	MET	Red-rumped Swallow (*Hirundo daurica*)	38°08′N 5°18′E 120′SE Minorca	M.V. *Singularity*
29 Jul 1200		Curlew (*Numenius arquata*)	37°N 00°24′W 50′SE C. Palos (Spain)	Circling ship M.V. *Singularity*

TABLE E

RED SEA AND GULF OF ADEN

1977

Date (time)	*Obs.*	*Species (Latin name)*	*Posn. (nearest land)*	*Remarks, weather, etc.*
8 Mar 1030	MET	Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*)	20°41′N 38°25′E 40′SW Jeddah	S. few hrs. NW/6-8 bc M.V. *Strathdoon*
26 Jun 0900Z	MET	Kestrel (2) (*Falco tinnunculus*)	12°15′N 47°48′E Gulf of Aden. 60′N Somalia	S.S. *Moreton Bay*
6 Aug 1330	SJH	Red-rumped Swallow (*Hirundo daurica*)	14°20′N 49°57′E 24′S PDRY	Arr NW. S till dusk. SW/3-4 c.. good vis.
3 Sept	JTP	Hoopoe (*Upopa epops*)	27°18′N 34°13′E Red Sea	Seen also 4th and daily 7-11 Sept.
6 Sept	JTP	Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*)	13°44′N 42°56′E 8′E Gt. Hamish	S 3 hrs. Dep NW SE/1-2
22 Sept 0900-1300	MET	Swallow (6-10) Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*) Hoopoe	19°N 39°E 60′E Sudan Coast	M.V. *Clan Matheson*

23-24 Sept	MET	Swallow (12) Kestrel Dove sp. (max 12)	Red Sea Suez-Aden	M.V. *Tekoa* S 2 days. Dep. Perim Is.
28 Sept	MET	Swift sp. (70+) Kestrel sp.	10°N 41°30′E 70′W PDRY	C all day. 6 remained overnight. M.V. *Bendearg*
1-2 Oct	MET	Numerous birds including: Swallow sp flava Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*) Saker Falcon (*Falco cherrug*) Kingfisher sp. Little Bittern (*Iscobrynchos minutus*) Pipit sp. (*Anthus* sp.) Flycatcher sp.	Red Sea	M.V. *City of St. Albans* (Capt. P. E. Harwood, RNR) Wind NW
4 Oct am	MET	flava Wagtail Turtle Dove (*Streptopelia turtur*)	16°48′N 40°54′E 30′W Farasin Is.	M.V. *Clan Malcolm* S till arr. Suez
12 Oct 0800	MET	Swallow (25+)	23°19′N 30°50′E 60′SW Jeddah	M.V. *Clan MacIntosh* S. overnight. 5 died
15 Oct	MET	Swallow (several)	21°14′N 38°03′E	S.S. *Benledi* One S 10 mins
15 Oct 0745	JTP	Nightjar (*Caprimulgus europaeus*)	14°29′N 50°12′E Gulf of Aden. 20′S PDRY	S. SE/3
16 Oct 0930	JTP	Hoopoe	12°27′N 44°04′E Bab-el-Mandeb St.	S. E/2
17 Oct 1730	JTP	Swallow (4)	18°49′N 39°40′E 60′W Saudi Arabia	S.SE/1-2
21 Oct 0330	MET	Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*)	Red Sea 23′E St. John's Is.	M.V. *Markhor*
29 Nov	RRW	Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*)	Aden outer harbour	Fishing. Took catch to top of foremast
27 Dec 0905Z	MET	Grey Heron	16°N 54°13′E 60′SE PDRY	M.V. *Strathdoon*

ANALYSIS BY SEA AREAS—TABLE E (*continued*)

1978

Date (time)	*Obs.*	*Species (Latin name)*	*Posn. (nearest land)*	*Remarks, weather, etc.*
19 Feb	MET	Hoopoe	Red Sea Passing Perim Is.	S. 5 mins. M.V. *City of Wellington*
27 Feb	WW	Hoopoe (3)	18°02′N 39°41′E SE Port Sudan	S several hours Wind NW
6 Mar	MET	Kestrel (M)	26°06′N 35°04′E 130′S Sinai. 50′E Egypt coast	
16 Mar	WW	Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*)	5′ Aden	S. few mins. Wind SW
17 Jul	MET	Swallow (15-20)	Red Sea. 28′E St John's Is.	S.S. *Kowloon Bay*

TABLE F
INDIAN OCEAN

1976

Date (time)	*Obs.*	*Species (Latin name)*	*Posn. (nearest land)*	*Remarks, weather, etc.*
19 Jan 0815	PWGC	Squacco Heron (*Ardeola ralloides*)	15°53′S 42°55′E 92′ WNW Madagascar	S. 5 mins. Dep NE
20 Jan 1607	PWGC	Turnstone (3) (*Arenaria interpres*)	09°50′S 45°54′E 29′SW Aldabra	Flying steadily NNE/18 kts Overcast SW/3
13 Oct 1700	PWGC	House Martin (*Delichon urbica*)	35°03′S 29°16′E 140′SE East London	S. wind NNE/6
17 Oct 0915 1220 1700	PWGC	Turnstone Wheatear ?sp. House Martin (15+) House Martin (3) Turnstone Swallow (1 ad, 1 juv) (*Hirundo rustica*)	23°07′S 40°33′E 173′W Madagascar 22°30′S 40°44′E 21′ESE Ile Europa 21°45′S 41°05′E 120′W Madagascar	Flying SE Wind NW/6 overcast Arr. WNW S. Wind W/S S. NNW/2 S. prob from am S.
18 Oct 0200	PWGC	House Martin (40-50 juv)	20°06′S 41°31′E 23′SE Mozambique	Violent thunderstorm Wind SE/2 10 remained until 0900 3 found dead

1045	PWGC	Squacco Heron	18°28′S 41°55′E 120′W Madagascar	S Var/2 overcast
1700		House Martin (8)	17°11′S 42°22′E	Possibly from a.m.
		Swallow (1 juv)	93′W Madagascar	
		Blue-cheeked Bee-eater (7) (*Merops superciliosus*)	21′SW Ile Juan de Nova	Arr. from E
		Black Cuckoo ? (*Cuculus cafer*)		S.
21 Oct	PWGC	Turnstone (1ad, 1 juv)	05°07′S 47°19′E	S until 26th. Tired
1200			260′NW Aldabra 450′E Pemba Is.	Fed tinned shrimps
24 Oct	PWGC	Nightjar ? sp. Egyptian ?	07°54′N 53°15′E	S. SW/2
0915		(*Caprimulgus aegyptius*)	175′ESE Somalia	
		Roller (2) (1 ad, 1 juv) (*Coracias garrulus*)		
		Redstart (M) (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*)		
		Eleonora's Falcon (4) (*Falco eleonorae*)		S. 1 rem 1600
1025		Stone Curlew (*Burhinus oedicnemus*)	08°N 53°23′E 170′ESE Somalia	S. till dusk SW/2 c
1630		flava Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*)	09°12′N 53°51′E 163′SE Somalia	S. 4 prob wagtails flew overhead
		White Wagtail (*Motacilla alba*)		S. light airs bc
		Temmink's Stint (*Calidris temminkii*)		S.
		Egyptian Nightjar		S.
25 Oct	PWGC	Turnstone	11°57′N 55°29′E	S.
0645		Night Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)	70′SE Socotra	S. until 1600. Reported to have caught flying fish
1700		flava Wagtail (F)	13°53′N 56°24′E	S. Calm. b
		Swallow	137′SE Socotra	S.
26 Oct	PWGC	Spoonbill (*Platelea leucorodia*)	17°35′N 52°13′E	S. light airs b
1205		flava Wagtail (2)	86′SSE Oman	
			1977	
28 Feb	PWGC	Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*)	16°55′S 42°27′E	S. NW4
1700			17′NW Ile Juan de Nova	

ANALYSIS BY SEA AREAS—TABLE F 1977 (*continued*)

Date (time)	*Obs.*	*Posn. (nearest land)*	*Species (Latin name)*	*Remarks, weather, etc.*
18 Sept 0920	MET	Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*)	31°30′S 32°E 75′SE Durban	M.V. *Orotana*
12 Oct 1030	SJH	Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*)	14°42′N 55°47′E 150′NNE Socotra	Arr. N. S 10mins Wind E/3-4 5/Cu. Good vis.
		Kestrel (F) (*Falco tinnunulus*)		S. Dep W
		European Nightjar (*Caprimulgus europaeus*)		S. 2 hrs. Dep SW
13 Oct 1745	JTP	Hoopoe (*Upopa epops*)	19°26′N 58°19′E 100′SE Muscat	S. ESE/2-3
14 Oct 1200	SJH	Nightjar	05°16′N 50°49′E 140′E Somalia	Flying astern of ship 20 mins. Dep WSW 3/8Cu. SE/2-3 good vis.
22 Nov	MET	Spotted Eagle Owl (*Bubo africanus*)	9°45′N 53°45′E 100′E Somalia	M.V. *Strathdevon*
24 Nov	MET	Scops Owl (*Otus scops*)	08°40′N 59°20′E 360′SE Socotra	M.V. *Garbeta* (P. & O.) Capt. S. Harwood

TABLE G
PERSIAN GULF AND GULF OF OMAN

1976

Date (time)	*Obs.*	*Species (Latin name)*	*Posn. (nearest land)*	*Remarks, weather, etc.*
1 Feb 1412	PWGC	Reef Heron (*Egretta schistacea*)	24°45′N 52°44′E 9′ nearest land	S.
11 Aug	PWGC	Hoopoe	25°38′N 52°27′E	S all day
26 Oct	PWGC	Spoonbill (*Platelea leucorodia*)	17°35′N 58°13′E	S light airs b
		flava Wagtail (2) (*Motacilla flava*)	86′SSE Oman	
27 Oct 1230	PWGC	Egyptian Nightjar (2) (*Caprimulgus aegyptus*)	22°38′N 59°56′E 10′NE Ras al Hadd	S. ESE/3 b One still there 1700
1700		Red-backed Shrike (*Lanuis collurio phoenicuroides*)	23°09′N 59°28′E 20′ Coast Oman	

28 Oct 1700	PWGC	Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*)	25°N 57°34′E 40′SSW Jask	S. light airs b
		Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*)		S. winter plumage
30 Oct 0700	PWGC	Crag Martin (5+) (*Hirundo rupestris*)	27°06′N 50°23′E 26′NE Ras Ju'aymah	Circled SW/4 b
0830		Wheatear sp. (2)		
		Pied Wheatear (*Oenanthe pleschanka*)		
31 Oct am	PWGC	Houbara Bustard? (*Chlamydotis undulata*)	26°57′N 50°03′E Off Ras Ju'aymah	Flying around ship NNW/4 b
		Wheatear sp.		S.
		Desert Wheatear (5+) (*Oenanthe deserti*)	8′NNE land	S.
		Pied Wheatear (M)		

1977

15 Sept 0830-2000	SJH	Lesser Kestrel (9-11) (*Falco naumanni*)	29°44′N 49°52′E Shat-el-arab anchorage	Wind SW/3 Few clouds vis good.
		Sandmartin (200+) (*Riparia riparia*)		5 Kestrels roosted overnight 1530 first Sand Martin increased to 200 by 1730, hovering round vessel feeding insects
		Red-backed Shrike		
		Lesser Grey Shrike (*Lanius minor*)		
		Wood Warbler (*Phylloscopus sibilatrix*)		
		Whitethroat (*Sylvia communis*)		
		Lesser Whitethroat (*Sylvia corruca*)		
		Wheatear (10-12) (*Oenanthe oenanthe*)		
		Isabelline Wheatear (20+) (*Oenanthe isabellina*)		
		Black-eared Wheatear (4) (*Oenanthe hispanica*)		
		Pied Wheatear		
		Nightingale (*Luscinia megarhyncos*)		
		Common Babbler (*Turdoides caudatis*)		

ANALYSIS BY SEA AREAS—TABLE G 1977 (*continued*)

Date (time)	*Obs.*	*Species (Latin name)*	*Posn. (nearest land)*	*Remarks, weather, etc.*
5 Oct	SJH	Nightjar (*Caprimulgus europaeus*)	28°51′N 49°52′E	S 8 hrs One V exhausted. Arr
0900-1000		Icterine Warbler (*Hippolais icterina*)	40′W Iran	N dep SSW.Wind NNW/2-3
		Isabelline Wheatear (5)		Fine and clear
		Black-eared Wheatear		
		Wheatear sp. n.k. (10-15)	26°11′N 54°33′E	
			10′S Iran Coast	
9 Oct	SJH	Isabelline Wheatear (M)		
10 Oct	SJH	Egyptian Nightjar	23°40′N 58°52′E	Arr. NW. S till dusk, tired
1130			15′N Oman Coast	
20 Nov	MET	African Hobby (2) (*Falco cuvieri*)	15°12′N 56°48′E	S.S. *Esso Scotia*
0600			180′ Oman Coast	S. 2 days. Ate small birds
		1978		
6 Mar	WW	Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus collybita*)	Off Bahrein	S few mins. Wind SE
22 Mar	PMR	Lesser Kestrel (M)	35′NE Oman	Arr S. Dep N
1015				
28 Mar	PMR	Long-eared Owl (*Asio otus*)	24′W Kov-al-Fakkan	S 1 hr. Dep N. Wind N/2 kts.
0630				
3 Apr-24 May	PMR	Red-necked Phalarope (300+)	25°22′N 57°14′E	Gps 7-8 almost daily till 24
		(*Phalaropus lobatus*)	S of Jask	May Max 300 on 2nd May.
				Rising from surface to height
				of 100 ft but carried down-
				wind 2 crashed on board
14 Apr	PMR	Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*)	8′SW Oman	S. 15 mins.
17 Apr	PMR	Roller (*Coracias garrulus*)	4′S Jask	Circled twice dep N
1015				
1600		Bee-eater (*Merops apiaster*)		S. 1 hr
18 Apr	PMR	Nightjar	S Jask	
0900				S. 1 hr
29 May	PMR	Kestrel (M)	12′NE Ras al Hadd	Followed ship SE 30 mins dep
				W wind SE/8 kts.

26 Aug 0900	DMS	Hoopoe (*Upopa epops*)	25°11′N 54°50′E Gulf of Oman	S. Phot. Dep E
29 Aug	DMS	Hoopoe	24°50′N 53°12′E	S Several hrs
15 Aug 0700	DMS	Wheatear sp.	24°50′N 53°12′E	
22 Aug 1600	DMS	Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*)	24°55′N 53°29′E	

TABLE H
PACIFIC, PHILIPPINE SEA AND SOUTH CHINA SEA
1977

Date (time)	*Obs.*	*Species (Latin name)*	*Posn. (nearest land)*	*Remarks, weather, etc.*
1 Jul	MET	White-necked (Pacific) Heron (*Ardea pacificae*)	20°S 90°E 1500′NW Fremantle	S.S. *Moreton Bay* Found among containers
27 Aug	DMS	Barn Swallow (7) (*Hirundo rustica*)	5°12′N 114°44′E 10′ offshore Brunei	Arr NW dep SE Wind WNW/2
28 Aug-1 Sept	DMS	Barn Swallow (c.200)	As above to 4°41′N 114°07′E 70′NW Labuan, Brunei	Single birds and small groups headed towards land flying low over sea
17 Sept	DMS	Barn Swallow (3)	4°44′N 113°45′E 16′WNW Baran Pt.	Wind SW/3
23 Oct	NC	White-bellied Pigeon (*Treron sieboldii*)	26°22′N 132°13′E 200′SE Ryuku Is.	Circled ship NE/22 kts.
		Redpoll (2) (*Carduelis flammea*)		One. X
24 Oct	NC	Barn Swallow	21°10′N 134°12′E 460′SE Okinawa midway between Ryuku Is. and Marianas	
8 Nov	MET	Asian Dowitcher ? (*Limnodromius semipalmatus*)	6°54′N 109°26′E 270′SE Vietnam	M.V. *Wild Cormorant*
13 Nov	NC	Lesser Golden Plover? (*Pluvialis dominica*)	10°N 137°E 83′NNW Yap	Circled twice. Wind S/5 kts.
30 Dec 0100Z	NAA	Water Pipit (*Anthus spinoletta*)	33°54′N 160°18′E 1150′ SE Kuril Is.	S 3 days. Wind WNW/4

ANALYSIS BY SEA AREAS—TABLE H 1977 (*continued*)

1978

Date (time)	*Obs.*	*Species (Latin name)*	*Posn. (nearest land)*	*Remarks, weather, etc.*
9 Apr	MET	Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*)	Off Ryuku Is.	M.V. *City of Canterbury*
9 Apr	MET	Dusky Warbler (*Phylloscopus fuscatus*)	24°39′N 129°29′E 200′S Okinawa	M.V. *Strathardle*
17 Apr	JWW	Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*)	11°25′N 112°23′E 300′ SE Vietnam	Arr W. C 10 mins Dep E NE/2
26 Apr 1200	JWW	Cattle Egret (2) (*Bubulcus ibis*)	28°02′N 131°17′E 100′SE Kyushu	C. once. Arr SE dep W Wind NE/5 Good vis.
27 Apr 1745	JWW	Whimbrel (*Numenius phoepus*)	22°10′N 124°32′E 160′SE Taiwan	Arr NE S. till dusk Wind NE/5
2 Jun	MET	Grey Heron	34°N 141°42′E 110′E Japan	M.V. *Cape Ortegal*

SOME EXTRACTS FROM METEOROLOGICAL REPORTS 1977/1978

From notes received and selected by
Captain N. B. J. Stapleton, R.D.

The many illustrated sketches now included in the Meteorological extracts are proving of much interest, and it would be of even more interest if reporting ships' members could take, and send in, photographs whenever the opportunity arose.

SOOTY TERN

Captain P. D. Cullen, C.S. *Manchester Vanguard*, in position 09°17′S, 79°40′E at 0100 GMT on 26th June, 1977. Mr G. Green, Deck Cadet, found a Sooty Tern (*Sterna fuscata*) hopping around the funnel deck. He brought it to the bridge where it was fed on bread, milk and water.

At 0200 GMT on 28th June, 1977 in position 00°45′N, 67°15′E, "Sooty" was put out on the wing of the bridge to see if he would attempt to take off. After about 10 minutes and a few dummy runs, he finally succeeded and was last seen abaft the lifeboats gaining height. During his stay he was given water and raw fish, but any "food-water" was refused. Good luck, "Sooty"!
Observers: Captain P. D. Cullen; Mr W. A. Lowe, Chief Officer, and Cadet G. Green.

RED-BILLED TROPIC-BIRDS

Captain G. Downie, M.V. *Baron Belhaven*, in position 18°34′N, 51°42′W at 0930 GMT. On 25th July, 1977 two Red-billed Tropic-birds were observed about half a mile away from the ship. At first they were thought to be land birds having a fast deep wiry beat to their wings, as in a pigeon's flight, although they had the glider's long slim wing and the sea diver's powerful body. One of the birds eventually came close enough for the following vague description to be attempted. The body shape and size was that of a full-grown, if slim, Gannet. The underside was off-white and the back speckled grey and white, the bill appeared straight (but the observation was not good enough to be certain) and quite long, the face and bill were a bright orange colour. The wings were long and very slim, the span being approximately 6 feet while at no point did the wing exceed an estimated 4 inches in breadth. The cry, which could be heard a long way off, was short and sharp but high-pitched and somehow not unlike the squeak of a mouse. The flight of both birds was erratic, changing altitude and course rapidly but without apparent reason. Most of the aerobatics were carried out at an altitude of about 200 feet. The observation ended some 15 minutes after it started with the birds fading into the background of early morning grey. The nearest land, Barbados, was about 560 nautical miles to the southwest.

Observer: Mr P. Smart, Chief Officer.

WILSON'S STORM-PETREL

Captain I. Lumley, M.V. *City of Guildford*, in position 6°50′S, 5°50′W. At 0230 on 11th September, 1977 a Wilson's Storm-Petrel (*Oceanites oceanicus*) was found in the boiler room! The bird was kept overnight and appeared to be in good condition. It was taken on deck the following morning and after several fruitless attempts at taking off launched itself over the side and immediately became airborne. It flew with the characteristic erratic movement of this type of Petrel.

Description: Dark grey plumage except for white patch above "squared" tail feathers. Wilson's Storm-Petrels have conspicuous greyish bands on upperwing coverts showing in flight. Wing span 13 inches, black webbed feet with no yellow on webs visible. Protrusion on upper beak.

Bird was released in position 5°0′S, 7°05′W.

Observer: Mr D. E. Ayre, Second Officer.

CHRISTMAS ISLAND TROPIC-BIRD

Captain A. Maclean, S.S. *Benalder*, on 10th July, 1978 (east of Minicoy, approximate position 6°2′N, 70°8′E, on passage from Port Said towards Port Kelong). A bird was found on the funnel deck, and appeared either exhausted or unconscious. It remained thus for at least three hours until it was lifted into a box. It appeared to have been injured and may have hit the ship's aerials. The bird (named "Minnie") was given water through a syringe and a dish of raw fish. "Minnie" was predominantly coloured white with black markings round the eyes, all the white plumage being tinged, quite noticeably, a golden orange. Beak yellow and quite long. Its tail had two very long narrow feathers extending from the centre fan, and all showed a thin black line along the centre: (*Phaethon lepturus fulvus*, Christmas Island Tropic-bird).

Two passengers took care of the bird. On arrival at Singapore "Minnie" was handed over to the Islands' Bird Sanctuary. Their representative said he had never seen this type before and believed it was a Frigate-bird! Contrary to our own opinion, as we believed it to be a white-tailed Tropic-bird, this conclusion being drawn after consulting back issues of the *Marine Observer*, which indeed it was.

(Note by Editor. This was a very long way to the west for a Christmas Island Tropic-bird and was probably a White-tailed Tropic-bird, *Phaethon lepturus*, which is often seen tinged with apricot colour.)

COOK'S PETRELS

Captain W. A. Murison, S.S. *Flinders Bay*, on passage from Balboa to Wellington, in position 37°33′S, 171°01′W (west of New Zealand), course 249 degrees, speed 21.5 knots, wind easterly force 5 with following seas. At 1730 on 28th January, 1978 a flock of about 15 Cook's Petrels (*Pterodroma cooki*) were sighted following the ship, flying backwards and forwards across the wake and up the starboard side to fly parallel with the ship, often near the bridge. They flew in pairs and occasionally threes, and appeared to be chasing each other and were heard to give an excited, high-pitched "kee kee kee" call at regular intervals.

They breed on Little Barrier Island, northern New Zealand. Regularly seen on route from New Zealand to Panama. Quoted as "regularly attracted to ships' lights".

They had grey topsides with a dark "M" on their wing backs, a white forehead, greyish crown, mainly white undersides but with *thin black margins* on the undersides of their wings. Their flight was quick with many upward swoops, made with bouts of rapid wing beats followed by straight winged gliding.

They stayed with us until dark and their calls could be heard occasionally during the night. The same or similar birds were with us until about noon the next day. Although I carry several sea bird identification books, it was difficult to make a positive identification.

Wing span: 25 inches to 30 inches.

RED-TAILED TROPIC-BIRD

Captain S. C. Carr, M.V. *Zealandic*, whilst on passage from Balboa towards Auckland, in position 26°34′S, 156°02′W on 20th March, 1977. A fine specimen of a Red-tailed Tropic-bird (*Phaethon rubricauda*) which had been following us since we left the Galapagos Islands, landed on deck. I had never seen this type of sea bird at such close range and was impressed by the beautiful plumage which gave the impression of a pale lemon light shone directly from mother-of-pearl which in turn reflects to give a predominantly pink blue. From a distance of more than 10 feet the plumage appeared to be dense white as any normal Gull would have been, but the closer one approached the warmer the toning of the feathers became.

The overall wing span measured 3 feet 2 inches, standing height before spreading wings 17½ inches, standing height crouched 9 inches; length overall was a difficult task as one can imagine with the bird's formidable beak. The tail feathers (thin red one) was well over 18 inches and the body estimated 15 inches from base of beak to "parson's nose". During its short spell on board overnight, and part of the morning, the bird did drink, or appear to drink, some water. With some difficulty we noticed the bird was

trying to make a beeline for the storm ports in the bulwarks and it was then felt that it was injured. The bird appeared to hobble, often stumbling on its own feet as it tried to make the journey to freedom. We were informed that the Tropic-bird is quite ungainly on land because of the unusual position of the centre of gravity in their bodies. Rather than pivoting around their legs they appear to bob and waggle like some marathon discotheque devotee!

The Radio Officer and myself decided to give the bird some assistance but before taking such action we donned ourselves like fire-fighters on a carrier's flight deck with aluminium/asbestos fire gloves and a helmet with a protective visor! Sparks opted for a safe distance wearing a tin helmet.

Surprisingly the poor bird was not startled by our appearance and calmly allowed me to take him up in my arms and lift him over the bulwarks where I placed him on the gunwhale. With a friendly nip on my glove he turned round, looked at us both, and took off in the direction of Tahiti, giving a long whistle as he steadily beat his way through the air at a tremendous rate.
Observer: Not stated.

GANNETS

Captain D. Smith, *Manchester Vigour*, whilst in position 37°00′N, 09°10′W. On 13th May, 1978 whilst the vessel was preparing to round Cabo Sao Vincente on a course of 140 degrees a disturbance was noticed approximately 200 yards off the starboard bow, in the water. Once checked, this was found to be caused by 30+ Gannets, both adults and juveniles, dive-bombing the surface. As the water was also being thrashed by a large number of porpoises it was decided that there must have been a fairly large shoal of fish around. As we got closer we could even observe some of the larger fish leaping out of the water in a, no doubt, vain attempt to escape. Neither of the observers had ever observed such a large number of Gannets feeding together before.
Observers: Captain D. Smith and Mr P. Doyle, Third Officer.

RED-LEGGED KITTIWAKE

Captain J. H. Kitching, M.V. *Albright Pioneer*, whilst on passage from Kinuura, Japan, to Balboa, Panama Canal Zone in position 39°50′N, 163°24′W. At 1700 local time on 15th February, 1978 a Red-legged Kittiwake (*Rissa brevirostris*) was found on deck by the Chief Officer, in an exhausted state, in fact when retrieved it showed no hostility at all. It sat in its corner quite quietly. Food in the form of bread and water was placed for it; whether bread is normal Seagull food is open to question, but this one loved it and devoured all that was placed before it. As the night progressed it seemed to gain strength and took to wandering around the wheelhouse, but never travelling far from its corner.

The only trouble with keeping it in the wheelhouse was that it produced its own waste material at an amazing rate. The next morning it was allowed to wander on to the bridge wing from where it took to the air, resting a number of times on No. 4 hatch, and finally left us in position 39°45′N, 157°30′W.

The bird was about 30 cm tall and 50 cm long from the tip of its beak to its tail and had a wing span of about 1 metre, the back of its wings was of a light slate grey and the rest of the plumage was white, its legs were red and the beak yellow.

Note: These birds range in the southern portion of the Bering Sea. They breed on the Kommander Islands and Pribilof Island, and occur at sea south of the Aleutian Islands and further south.

BLACK-FOOTED ALBATROSS

Also following the ship at about the same time were at least two or three species of North Pacific Albatross; the most common was the Black-footed Albatross (*Diomedea nigripes*) and the Laysan Albatross (*Diomedea immutabilis*).

Observing Officers: The Master and Bridge Watchkeepers.

A LITTLE AUK

Captain D. S. Millard, M.V. *Manchester Crusade*, whilst on passage from Montreal towards Manchester. On New Year's Day 1978 during the evening 8 - 12 watch the Third Officer was presented on the bridge with a bird. The Chief Officer had discovered it waddling and flapping on the fore deck and decided that the Third Officer should identify it. By consulting *Sea and Coastal Birds* by Jiri Felix and published by Octopus Books, the bird was finally identified as a Little Auk (*Plautus alle*).

The bird, after leaving various "messages" across the chart table, was taken down to the bar! Due to a shortage of artists it was decided to photograph the bird and insert the photograph in the Log Book at a later date (due to the time taken for developing).

After convincing the Chief Officer's two young sons that the bird did NOT want to sleep with them it was relegated to the ship's office with food and water.

The following morning when placed on the gunwhale it promptly jumped into the water and was last seen frolicking in its natural habitat.

Observers: Mr J. L. Mitchell, Chief Officer, and his wife Mrs Mitchell and family, and other ship's officers.

Note: These birds occur and breed in the far North Atlantic islands and Greenland but move south somewhat in the winter months and could well have occurred on this route.

RED-TAILED TROPIC-BIRD

Captain T. R. Barton, M.V. *Mayfield*, on passage from Tauranga, (North Island) New Zealand towards Balboa, in position 13°0′S, 109°06′W, steering 059 degrees, speed 17½ knots. At about 1400 hours on 6th March, 1978 on returning from a fire patrol the bridge look-out reported to the Chief Officer that a large bird was on the after end of the boat deck. On investigation a sea bird was found. Description was as follows: length 40½ cm; bill 5½ cm; a single red/black feather protruded from below the tail feathers for about 22 cm, tapering from 2 mm to 1 mm. Wing feathers were coloured with flashes of black. Breast feathers tinged brown. Overall body/feather colouring of white. Feet: black webbed.

The bird breakfasted on a small squid about 11 cm long, with pink and white coloration, the tentacles could be made out clearly but there appeared to be a tube like a sheath over its body. The bird showed considerable strength on being picked up and was carried to the ship's side where, without hesitation, it flew in a northwesterly direction.

Note: The bird could be identified as a Red-tailed Tropic-bird (*Phaethon rubricauda*). No other species of Tropic-bird has red extended tail streamers.

Observers: Captain T. R. Barton; Mr A. T. Turner, Chief Officer and Cadet P. Marshall.

WANDERING ALBATROSS

Captain L. J. Brown, S.S. *Act 2*, on passage from Liverpool towards Melbourne in position 35°50′S, 22°10′E. On 3rd December, 1977 picked up an Albatross; it was tentatively identified as a "Wandering Albatross" with a wing span of 8 to 9 feet. Its bill was pink and the eyes appeared as black dots in the head with no streaks of colour through them as in the Black-browed Albatross (*Diomedea melanophris*).

The wings were black on the back and white on the undersides except for a very distinct black tip to each wing. Wings also had patches of white which suggested it was maturing. This Albatross staved with the ship for most of the trip across the southern Indian Ocean and at times took to "buzzing" the bridge as most Albatrosses tend to do.

Note: It has been confirmed that the bird was in fact a Wandering Albatross (*Diomedea exulans*).

No observers mentioned.

WILSON'S STORM-PETRELS

Captain E. G. Dixon, M.V. *Strathdyce*, on passage from Abu Dhabi towards Suez in position 13°38′N, 48°18′E. In the Gulf of Aden on 3rd July, 1977 observed three and four hundred Storm-Petrels in an area of around one square mile. Their markings

were: sooty black above with slightly lighter wing coverts, lower rump white and dark under parts. Tail squarish.
Note: These birds have since been confirmed as Wilson's Storm-Petrels (*Oceanites oceanicus*).

Large numbers of these Petrels migrate into the area from the Gulf of Oman south as far as the Gulf of Aden at this season.
Observer: Mr M. Pellett, Second Officer.

SOOTY TERN

Captain J. C. Fulbrook, M.V. *Wild Auk*, on passage from Sheerness towards Cape Town in position 7°38′S, 4°30′W. On 9th May, 1978 reported seeing a dead bird on deck with the following markings: Black wings on top with a white leading edge and all white underneath, beak 1½ inches, two long grey tail feathers.
Note: The bird has been identified as a Sooty Tern (*Sterna fuscata*) which frequently visits the area off the west coast of South Africa.
Observer: Mr R. M. Hughes, Third Officer.

COMMON KITTIWAKES

S.S. *Atlantic Causeway* (33937) in position 56°40′N, 25°40′W. At 0800 GMT on 9th September, 1977 sighted a flock of 20 to 30 seabirds quite different from the Fulmars which had been following the vessel since passing Cape Race, Newfoundland, approached from astern (west) and circled the vessel for about 10 - 15 minutes. These birds were smaller than the Fulmars, being about 60 - 70 cm in length, wing span about 100 cm. The plumage consisted of light grey back and wings with a very dark tip at each end. White head, white underneath (except for the wing tip), and the bill was short, pointed and yellow in colour. Their mode of flight was a marked contrast to that of the attendant Fulmars which use the updraughts to soar effortlessly along. These birds maintained a height of 30 - 35 metres above the sea and were constantly beating their wings to stay airborne and only gliding for a few seconds at a time. The flock flew off south after visiting the ship but were observed again eight hours later, following in our wake, but were gone by the following morning.
Note: The birds were identified as Common Kittiwakes (*Rissa tridactyla*).
Observer: Mr J. K. Brocklehurst, Second Officer.

OSPREYS

Captain L. E. Howell, M.V. *Mairangi Bay*, on passage from Suez towards Melbourne on 29th May, 1978 sighted what was thought to be a Hawk.

The bird was approximately 18 inches long and had a wing span of 36 inches. It was certainly bigger than a Sparrow-hawk.

The colouring was predominantly white with brown marked wings and distinct light brown markings behind the eyes. The underbody and legs with the exception of a bar across the underside of the wings which had a three finger-like brown feathers at the tips.
Note: Although this was a rather tricky description, this was undoubtedly an Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*). The species has a nearly worldwide distribution and has frequently been reported from sea, on more than one occasion in the Indian Ocean.
Observers: Captain L. E. Howell; Mr B. Brierly, Second Officer.

SHORT NOTES

Captain D. M. Simpson, M.V. *Pacific Supplier*, who has been supplying oil rigs off Brunei, Borneo, is now on similar duties weekly in the Persian Gulf. On a recent trip in August between Sharjah and the Zaqqum oilfield his ship encountered enormous flocks of Socotra Cormorants of some 10,000 birds. In one case his ship passed through the edge of one concentration where the birds waited until his bow was almost on top of them before diving to escape. He also mentioned the frequent occurrence of Hoopoes on board, a frequent occurrence during migration.

BIRD LIFE OF SOUTH-EAST IRAN

The Rev. N. P. H. Pond, Chaplain, R.N.

Nigel Pond has forwarded a delightful account of the bird life observed during the winter of 1977 off Bandar Abbas, and the sand dunes and mud flats of the broad delta south of Sirik. A complementary article by Lt.-Cdr. P. M. Reynolds, R.N. is included in the present volume.

BIRDWATCHING IN ANTIGUA

Petty Officer T. D. Toy, R.N., during a visit to Antigua, was fortunately able to contact Mr Carroll Holland (see *Sea Swallow*, Vol. 26, page 12), a most knowledgeable American ornithologist, and accompanied him on two expeditions, identifying 40 species, including the rather strange looking all-black smooth-billed Ani, *Crotophaga ani*, with its remarkable bill, the first of this species ever seen by Mr Holland.

BIRDWATCHING IN THE SEYCHELLES

Bernard and Mrs Watts, who visited the Seychelle Islands in November, 1978, have sent a most interesting report on species of birds observed during their stay.

NEW MEMBERS, 1978

Total 17

Thompson, Miss Christina, C.B.E., R.R.C. Rejoined. 16 Millbrook Court, Keswick Road, Putney, London, S.W.15

Vallance, B., R.N. Aux. Service, 12 Chestfield Close, Rainham, Gillingham, Kent, ME8 7DR

Lewis, P. P. R., 4th Eng. Officer M.N., 13 Everest Close, High Wycombe, Bucks.

Craig, Lt.-Cdr. R. N., 75 Mays Lane, Shibbington, Hants.

Watkins, E. W. C., Capt. M.N., 33 Bassett Green Close, Southampton, SO2 3QQ

Johnson, N. D. T., Capt. M.N., R.D., R.N.R., Waters Edge, 14 Park Lane Road, Poole, Dorset, BH15 1TR

Gould, Miss Pat, C.B.E., R.R.C., Q.A.R.R.N.S., 18 Park Road, Denmead, Portsmouth, Hants., PO7 6NE. (Ex-officio member joined as Full Member.)

Wilcock, J., Capt. M.N.I., c/o Fenny Marine Ltd., Fenny Compton, Warwickshire, CV33 0XD

Johnston, R. H., Chief Officer M.N., 21 Marine Approach, South Shields, Tyne and Wear

Thomas, P. H., Capt. M.N., R.D., Cobley Cottage, Spreyton, Crediton, Devon

Westwater, R. L., Capt. M.N., 49 Rife Way, Ferring, West Sussex BN12 5JY

Stratford, R. T. J., Min. of Defence (Navy) Dept., 9 Beatrice Ave., Keyham, Plymouth, PL2 1NW

Partridge, K. E., (ex-C.E.R.A., R.N.), 165 Stanborough Road, Elburton, Plymouth, PL9 8NY

Buchanan, M. E., Cdr. R.N., Avenue Cottage, Warblington Ave., Havant, Hants.

Williams, D. O., Capt. M.N., 3 Chantry Ave., Bexhill-on-Sea, Sussex

Lisher, C. R., Sub-Lt., R.N.R., M.N., 41 Hill Park Road, Fareham, Hants.

Barry, T. M., Deck Cadet M.N., 4 Thornbury Close, Swansea Rd., Merthyr-Tidfil, Mid Glamorgan

OBITUARY

Dr B. B. Roberts, C.M.G., whose death occurred on 9th October, 1978, had been a most distinguished adviser on behalf of R.N.B.W.S. since the society's inception in 1947. A world-acclaimed authority on the Polar and Antarctic regions, both as an ornithologist and explorer, he played a leading part in the Antarctic Treaty in 1959 and in the allocation of place names.

Dr Jeffery Harrison, O.B.E. With the deepest regret we record the death on 1st September, 1978, of Dr Jeffrey Harrison, member of R.N.B.W.S. since 1949. Jeffery was an international ornithologist and sportsman devoted to the development and conservation of wildlife, particularly of waterfowl and wetlands, and had represented the government on many international conferences. Many will remember his initial development of the Sevenoaks Wildlife Reserve.

Dr C. Suffern, M.B.O.U., 29th January, 1978. (Member 1967.)

Mark Johnson, Third Officer, M.N. Lost with his ship in Antarctic, Spring 1978. (Member 1973.)

Captain R. M. Taylor, C.B.E., who died on 18th November, 1978, was our first Chairman of R.N.B.W.S. from its inception in 1947 to 1951, and will be remembered with affection by our original members.

MEMBERSHIP SUMMARY

Ex-Officio	7
Hon. Members	11
Life Members (original)	42
Life Members	12
Ordinary Members	270
Corporate Members	16

Totals: 342 Members + 16 Corporate Members = 358 and in addition 84 Associate Members, Museums and Libraries.